

Message Text

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45

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6207

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

CRR 13TH AF CLARK

CINCPACREPPHIL SUBIC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 10811

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, RP

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO CODEL WOLFF ON U.S. BASES

1. SUMMARY: DURING LUNCHEON MEETING WITH CODEL WOLFF AUG 5, PRESIDENT MADE VERY CAREFULLY TAILORED PRESENTATION ON U.S. BASES WHICH APPEARED TO SHIFT THE EMPHASIS OF THE PUBLIC PHILIPPINE APPROACH FROM AN INCREASINGLY RESTRICTIVE ONE TO A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE "BIG PICTURE" ONE. PRESS COVERAGE OF TALKS WITH PRESIDENT DID NOT EMPHASIZE BASES BUT CARRIED SEVERAL PURPORTED QUOTES WHICH WOULD SEEM TO SUPPORT A SUPPOSITION THAT THE PUBLIC LINE HAS SHIFTED SOMEWHAT. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT DISCUSSED U.S. BASES WITH CODEL WOLFF IN CONTEXT OF RISING NATIONALISM IN ASIA. PHILIPPINES, HE SAID, HAD HISTORICALLY BEEN BERY COOPRATIVE WITH U.S. BUT IN ORDER FOR PHILIPPINES TO CONTINUE TO BE USEFUL TO U.S. IN TERMS OF HELPING PRESERVE PEACE IN THE AREA, IT WOULD HAVE TO RID ITSELF OF DEPENDENT LABEL. PHILIP-
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PINES HAD TO BE ABLE TO MAKE CLEAR TO ITS NEIGHBORS IN

THE AREA THAT PHILIPPINES WAS SOVEREIGN AND THAT IT WAS VOLUNTARILY (PRESIDENT USED THIS TERM SEVERAL TIMES) MAKING FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO U.S. FOR PEACE KEEPING PURPOSES RATHER THAN BEING OBLIGED TO GRANT BASE RIGHTS UNDER AMERICAN PRESSURE. PRESIDENT ASSURED CODEL THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO MAKE AVAILABLE WHATEVER FACILITIES U.S. "REQUIRED" IN ORDER TO ENABLE IT TO CONTRIBUTE TO EQUILIBRIUM IN THE AREA THROUGH CONTROL OF AIR AND SEA LANES OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC. HE CONCLUDED DISCUSSION OF U.S. BASES BY STATING THAT ADJUSTMENT TO PHILIPPINE REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE A SIMPLE MATTER THAT COULD EASILY BE RESOLVED.

3. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT ONCE REFER TO "EXTRA-TERRITORIALITY" OR TO COMMERCIAL USES OF THE BASES NOR WAS THIS MENTIONED, EXCEPT TANGENTIALLY, BY OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH CODEL WOLFF. DURING COURSE OF DISCUSSION OF BASES WITH CODEL WOLFF, PRESIDENT ASKED GENERAL ROMULO TO PREPARE AIDE MEMOIRE ON BASES FOR PRESENTATION TO CODEL WOLFF BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE. GENERAL ROMULO PREPARED AIDE MEMOIRE BUT PRESIDENT SAID IT WOULD REQUIRE SOME REVISION, SUGGESTING THAT GENERAL ROMULO HAD CAST IT IN USUAL DFA RESTRICTIVE VEIN OF EXTRA-TERRITORIALITY.

4. THE PRESS CARRIED PURPORTED QUOTES OF PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO CODEL WOLFF SUPPLIED BY MALACANANG HANDOUT. QUOTES GENERALLY PARALLELED "BIG PICTURE" REMARKS OF PRESIDENT EMPHASIZING (A) THAT PHILIPPINES RECOGNIZED RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY COUNTRY TO CONTRIBUTE TO WORLD PEACE; (B) PHILIPPINES COULD CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE BY GIVING U.S. MEANS TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION IN WESTERN PACIFIC, (C) PHILIPPINE CONTRIBUTION OF FACILITIES BEING OFFERED "VOLUNTARILY AND AS INDEPENDENT, DIGNIFIED COUNTRY AND PEOPLE;" (D) FACILITIES WILL ALLOW U.S. "TO MAINTAIN THEIR PRESENT POSITION IN THE SEA LANES AND THE AIR LANES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND THUS KEEP THE PRESENT BALANCE AND EQUILIBRIUM AMONG THE WORLD POWERS AND MAINTAIN THE FOUNDATION FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE AREA." ALL PAPERS CARRIED VERSION OF THESE QUOTES. HOWEVER, ORIENT NEWS PRECEDED USE OF QUOTES BY MISLEADING HEADLINE STATING "MARCOS DEMANDS RP CONTROL OF THE BASES."

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5. COMMENT: LINE EXPOUNDED BY PRESIDENT IS ON SURFACE A CONSTRUCTIVE TURN-AROUND FROM INCREASINGLY RESTRICTIVE COMMENTARY ON BASES THAT HAS EMERGED AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT SINCE MELCHOR'S PROPOSALS FOR COMMERCIAL USE OF THE BASES AND THE PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION OF HIGHLY CHARGED WORD "EXTRA-TERRITORIALITY." PRESIDENT'S MODULATED EXPOSITION COULD MERELY BE ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE GOP IMAGE ON BASES

BEFORE SUCH EXCELLENT TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY
AS CODEL WOLFF. IT COULD ALSO BE INTENDED AS GUIDANCE
TO PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO KEEP THE "BIG PICTURE" IN MIND
AND NOT BEAR DOWN QUITE SO HEAVILY OR SO PUBLICLY ON RE-
STRICTIVE FEATURES THAT PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
HAVE BEEN DEBATING WITH RESPECT TO U.S. BASES. EXTENT
TO WHICH PRESIDENT INTENDS TO DEVELOP THIS BALANCED
APPROACH WILL PROBABLY EMERGE ONLY OVER A PERIOD OF TIME
BUT COULD BE INDICATED IN AIDE MEMOIRE ON BASES THAT GENERAL
ROMULO STILL CHARGED WITH PREPARING.
SULLIVAN

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